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ANNOUNCEMENT

Some months ago the Editor indicated to the President of our Association his desire to relinquish his office upon the completion of the current Volume. For the truly friendly spirit of cooperation accorded to us during our editorial quadrennium we desire to record here our sincere gratitude.

Professor Harry L. Levy, of Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, New York 21, New York, has been elected Editor of *The Classical Weekly*, and all correspondence should henceforth be addressed to him.

Members of the Association and friends of our publication will be happy to learn that the editorial responsibilities will be in competent hands to which they will wish to give their support broadly and generously.

THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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Edward H. Heffner, Editor, Bennett Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania.

Franklin B. Krauss, Secretary and Treasurer, The Pennsylvania State College, Box 339, State College, Pennsylvania.

Associate Editor, Wm. C. McDermott (for Book Reviews), University of Pennsylvania.

Contributing Editor, Donald W. Prakken, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

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LINKING THE OLD AND THE NEW IN ITALY

(Continued from p. 168)

Romans regarded the perpetuation of the family as of supreme importance. To marry and have children was no mere matter of pleasure and sentiment but a solemn duty to the State and to one's race. To be the last of one's line was so grievous that it was a condition to wish upon an enemy as a curse. The best insurance for the continuity of the family, for the maintenance of essential religious life and for the military preservation of the nation was to have many sons. Large families were, therefore, long the rule, and it was a sign of degeneration in the Latin stock when in the last century before the Christian era, the government had to take cognizance of a destructive change. The great ruler Augustus viewed the growing disrepute of matrimony and the sexual profligacy which accompanied it with great alarm, and his legislation which put premiums upon marriage and prolificacy and penalties upon selfish celibacy may not have been without suggestive power for Mussolini when, in order to prevent a falling birth-rate, he instituted, some years ago, his 'cult of the cradle.' Let us consider first, in summary fashion, the system of rewards and disabilities which was devised to make a Roman do his duty by the state in a conjugal way.

Celibates could not succeed to certain legacies to which the married could. Those who were married received special seats in the theatre. There were rewards for those who produced three children. But a father who resided in

Italy outside of Rome had to have four in order to win them, a father who lived in one of the provinces five. No doubt paternity would be most expensive in the capital. Since the prizes for fathering a numerous progeny included preferential treatment at elections to office and in the assumption of magisterial position as well as exemption from burdensome appointments,¹⁰⁷ the authorities had to deal eventually with the political trickster who after he had won what he wanted by fictitious adoption of children, then freed himself from his responsibilities by legally discarding his encumbrances.¹⁰⁸

Some years ago I happened to be living in Rome when a tax was levied upon bachelors to teach them that the man power of Italy must be kept up. The prescription led those who preferred the status of a matrimonial slacker to any such patriotic sacrifice of freedom as marriage might involve to wear badges or buttons of protest. The humor of these would probably have appealed more to Augustus, whose private morals set the worst of examples,¹⁰⁹ than it could to Mussolini, who fathered a family of rapid increase in spite of his addiction to mistresses culminating in his ignoble death with the last of them.¹¹⁰ I have seen a disc to wear in the buttonhole which displayed the picture of a naked infant with the legend: *È lui che paga la tassa*, 'It is he who pays the tax'. Omitting certain ribald inscriptions which might amuse a Roman emperor but which would affront the modesty of my reader, I may append others that caught my eye and fancy: *100 tasse ma non una moglie*, 'one hundred taxes but no wife'; *Meglio la tassa che la suocera*, 'Better the tax than a

mother-in-law'; *Sono celibe: pago la tassa*, 'I am single: I pay the tax'; *Sono celibe casto e puro*, 'I am single, chaste, and pure'.

Recent Italian legislation lays various penalties upon bachelordom. Not only has the income tax been made higher for those who have not married, but from the ages of twenty-five to sixty-five they pay a special levy. The privileges do not begin, however, with the accumulation of any little flock of three to five offspring. An employee of the state received various financial exemptions when he had seven or more children of Italian nationality. But when Sig. Giovanni Cittadino is only a plain John Citizen with no employment from the State, he must have a minimum of ten in order to qualify. The illegitimacy of a child does not necessarily eliminate him from these numberings: a *bastardo* is counted in, if either parent is willing to recognize him as a partial derivative.¹¹¹

While the inclusion of girls in the militarism which Mussolini imposed, so far as he could, upon Italian youth might seem to point to a contrary conclusion, we may say that Fascist education of the female emphasized the functions of womanhood as of dominant importance and stressed married life, therefore, as the proper career for every woman. Spinsters have never been so common in Italy as they are in certain older sections of our country.

In polite society of Italy, two thousand years ago parents exercised control over the marriage of their children, even as they do in corresponding circles of today.¹¹² Both parties to the union had to give consent, except possibly under early Republican law, when *patria potestas* was still supreme. It was a family arrangement, a *mariage de convenience*, in which finance played an important role. The opposite extreme of letting young men and women make their own choice at the very time when the most imperative of human passions has crippled any capacity for judicial appraisement of each other that they might under other circumstances possess, and then at their will announce that choice to their submissive elders, would strike many Italians of either period as holding out less promise of nuptial happiness than even an out-and-out *mari-*

age de convenience. In the latter a couple who are but poorly acquainted with each other at the outset may be expected—so the argument runs—to develop mutual affection through the propinquity which characterizes wedded life. Marriage in Italy may be quite a practical matter. The financial status of the contracting parties can be as important a consideration as it was among members of superior society in ancient Rome. The amount of a dowry still engages family negotiators as it did two millennia ago, but of these matters we need not speak in any detail here, but pass to some discussion of the wedding, of which they were a more or less sordid preliminary.

For the purpose of instituting comparisons between ancient and modern customs we may speak first of the marriage procession. The scene should be familiar enough to the student of Roman life but perhaps most vivid in the imagination of women of nubile age. The fall of night has brought to a happy end the ceremonies and social festivities of the day. The young couple are now to proceed to their new home by the light of torches and to the music of pipers, starting, so the poets would have us believe, with the rising of the evening star. The Italians have always been a pageant-loving and processional people, and, particularly at a wedding of fashionable distinction, there would be an ample audience assembling from the neighborhood at the shrilling of the pipes, with many of the spectators falling in line perhaps to increase the merrymaking and to joy in a rhythmic march. Cries to Hymen, the marriage god, would go up, there was singing of somewhat ribald and satiric songs, the groom would scatter among the omnipresent small boys nuts which they might either devour on the spot or thriftily reserve for use as marbles when they had time and inclination for a gambling game.¹¹³

Another occasion for these showers was a birthday party.¹¹⁴ Such doles, however, were no mere beneficence to youth, and the means of insuring fun and excitement through a scramble. At such a time of supreme and enviable felicity as a marriage the evil eye of jealousy was greatly dreaded, so that the superstitions of magic were sure to play a part. Since nuts are like the rice

that is thrown at weddings in our own country, one of nature's most abounding products, Italians may look upon them as a symbol of marital fecundity and also as bringing abundance to the house. The ancients probably regarded the practice as a way both to secure fertility by a bit of sympathetic magic and to placate potentially troublesome spirits by an offering of food.¹¹⁵ Loud noise was also supposed to keep demon enemies away from the wedding. The parade of wedding guests through the streets is still a picturesque sight in some parts of Italy.

The most interesting marriage procession that I have ever seen in Italy was in one of the hamlets at the tip of the island of Capri. The couple wended their way along a country lane which barely allowed passage between high walls. From the top of these walls, spectators, mostly women, volleyed their disconcerting jests and laughter at the bride and groom, or rather at brides and grooms; for it had been a double ceremony in the village church below. The male of each couple was obviously passing through an ordeal, but the women took the usual feminine joy in their festal attire and comely appearance. This was heightened by crowns of flowers which made them look a little more like the Roman bride, who wore under her flame-colored veil blossoms which she had gathered with her own hands on the morning of her wedding day. Showers of candy somewhat in the shape of nuts—it was not the season for the real ones—conveyed good luck to the couples symbolically, but to a lot of small boys actually. As fast as they could seize them, they put them in their mouths where they would be safest from the snatching of competitors and do the most good in spite of any adherent dirt acquired in the contest for them.

Bothersome as the milling youngsters might be, there was less trouble than there was, so I learn, in the Middle Ages at Bologna, where the showers upon the participants in the parade were so likely to take the form of flour, sawdust, snow, and other unpleasant missiles, that the law had to forbid the practice.¹¹⁶ Nuts, grain, and confetti seem to be the more usual largess in modern Italy,¹¹⁷ but the rich may scatter

coins, a custom which brings a bit of immediate prosperity of a more substantial sort.¹¹⁸ In Corsica the symbols of fertility thrown may be rice, wheat, or flowers.¹¹⁹ Among the objects that are showered at a Sicilian wedding are nuts, corn, chick peas, and beans.¹²⁰ In Sardinia they use grain, but also wool.¹²¹ The latter could emblemize the bride's domestic duty of spinning. This reminds us of a Roman custom which was observed by the new wife when she reached the house of her husband: she anointed the doorposts with oil as a symbol of fat days to come and wound them with woollen fillets which were a token of her own occupation as a housewife, unless, possibly we are to interpret both acts as merely dedicatory rites to deity.

In the Roman marriage procession the bride, or one or more of her companions, had carried a distaff and spindle,¹²² implements emblematic of her wifely virtue and domestic industry in the new home. Then we learn that, in some cases, her spouse met her at the door of the house, carrying fire and water, which also indicated that she was entering upon a housewifely career.¹²³ It is notable that among the shepherds of Corsica in our time it is the mother-in-law who thus greets the bride, handing her the key, and, by way of friendly suggestion, a spindle.¹²⁴ On the mainland of Italy, too, the distaff is sometimes presented, and occasionally it is accompanied by a kitchen apron—about as ingratiating a gesture, it would seem to us, as to have a mother-in-law at an American wedding hand her daughter-in-law a broom or a floor mop.¹²⁵ Actually, a broom, *scopa* (vulgarly called *gar-nata*), is sometimes the Italian gift.¹²⁶ A good daughter-in-law finding one which her mother-in-law has put across the doorway, picks it up and so begins life in her new home under her approval with a happy augury.¹²⁷ Among the higher classes it is now, of course, the throwing of confetti or sugar that is the auspicial act, and that is not likely to upset the equanimity of even the most imaginative and sensitive bride.

Italian customs according to which the groom presents his wife with several pieces of money, or a medal is cut in two so that each may have his share of it, both parts bearing an inscription,

divisi ma sempre uniti, 'divided but ever united', and another custom of a superstitious rather than a sentimental character, which leads the woman to put not only salt but a coin in her shoe as a safeguard against the injuries of magic, perpetuate, it may seem, some very ancient practices;¹²⁸ for a Roman might present his bride with gold pieces as a first night's gift,¹²⁹ while she herself would come to him with three pieces of money, an *as* in her hand, *i.e.* a copper penny to symbolize, we may suppose, her purchase money, another *as* in her shoe to be deposited on the hearth as a gift to the family Lares, a third in her purse, which she seems (our Latin text is somewhat dubious) to have bestowed at the shrine at the neighboring crossroads.¹³⁰

NOTES

¹⁰⁷ Important passages on the *ius trium liberorum*, preferential treatment and exemptions for the successfully dutiful are Plin., *Ep.* 2.13.8; 7.16.2; *Epist. to Trai.* 2, 95, 96; Tac., *Ann.* 2.51; Suet., *Claud.* 19; Gell. 2.15.

¹⁰⁸ See esp. Tac., *Ann.* 15.19.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Dio 54.16. It is noteworthy that neither of the consuls who framed the famous law, *lex Papia Popaea*, had wife or child himself: Dio 56.10.

¹¹⁰ Cf. on this Jean Ajalbert, *L'Italie en silence et Rome sans amour* (1935), 83, 85.

¹¹¹ Cicely M. Hamilton, *Modern Italy as Seen by an Englishwoman*, 90–91; 94.

¹¹² For recent Italian custom see, e.g., Federico Garlanda, *The New Italy* (a transl. by M. E. Wood of *La terza Italia, lettere di un Yankee*), 384.

¹¹³ Cf. Verg., *Ecl.* 8.29; Catullus 61.121–125; Plin., *N.H.* 15.86; Fest. 172. Similarly the Greeks had their *kataχύσματα*: Schol. Arist., Plut. 768.

¹¹⁴ CIL X.5849; Dessau 6269.

¹¹⁵ The reasons must always remain conjectural. Cf., however, E. Crawley, *The Mystic Rose, A Study of Primitive Marriage*, 324; H. J. Rose, *The Roman Questions of Plutarch*, confesses (105–106) that he cannot explain.

¹¹⁶ Ludovico Frati, *La vita privata di Bologna dal secolo XIII al XVII*, 50; cf. for our time Saverio La Sorsa, *Il folklore nelle scuole di Puglia*, 27.

¹¹⁷ Estella Canziani, 'Courtship, Marriage, and Folk-belief in Vall d'Ossola', *Folklore*, XXIII (1912) 460; E. Kagarov, 'La classificazione dei riti nuziali con speciale riguardo all'Italia', *Il folklore italiano*, VI (1931) 9; Saverio La Sorsa, 'Costumi Garganici', *Il folklore italiano*, 31. Boys prefer sweets: Lina Duff Gordon, *Home Life in Italy, Letters from the Apennines*, 170; Phyllis H. Williams, *op. cit.* (see note 3) 87: Almond candy thought to confer or assure fertility. But there may be a minimum of sugar in the candy: C. Beni,

Guida illustrata del Casentino (1889), 84–85. Giuseppe Ferraro, 'Botanica popolare di Carpeneto D'Aequi', *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, IV (1885) 188–189; Antonio Massara, 'Usi nuziali dell'agro novarese d'una volta e d'adesso', *Archivio* XXII (1905) 294. If they disappoint the boys, they cry out wishes that the marriage may be sterile: A. Massara, *op. cit.*, 295.

¹¹⁸ Gennaro Finamore, *Tradizioni popolari abruzzesi*, III, 43.

¹¹⁹ Gaston Vuillier, *The Forgotten Isles*, 241.

¹²⁰ Giuseppe Pitre, *op. cit.* (see note 52) II, 74; *Usi nuziali del popolo Siciliano*, 29–31; Francis M. Guercio, *Sicily, the Garden of the Mediterranean*, 219; a handful of corn showered on bride and groom, comfits, generally almonds, distributed.

¹²¹ G. B. Taylor, *Italy and the Italians*, 187.

¹²² See Plin., *N.H.* 8.194; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.* 31.

¹²³ Cf., e.g., Varr., *L.L.* 5.61 and Dionys. 2.30. In Sicily the wedded pair may observe the custom of prospering their new home by entering carrying in the hands small bottles of wine and oil and a bit of salt that ought to avert witchcraft and the maleficence of envy. There are also proper words to say to bring good luck there: Arturo Trombatore, *Folklore Catanese*, 45–46.

¹²⁴ Gaston Vuillier, *The Forgotten Isles*, 240.

¹²⁵ Gennaro Finamore, *op. cit.* (see note 118) 45: several full distaffs; *Encyc. Ital.*, s.v. 'Umbria'; Estella Cauziani, *Through the Apennines and the Lands of the Abruzzi*, 57; Michele Placucci, 'Usi a pregiudizi dei contadini della Romagna', *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari* III (1884) 350. A handkerchief, even accompanied by a motherly kiss, might be unpleasantly suggestive: E. Canziani, *loc. cit.* (see note 117).

¹²⁶ M. Placucci, *op. cit.* (see note 125), 351.

¹²⁷ Arrigo Balladoro, 'Alcune credenze e superstizioni del popolo veronese', *Archivio per lo studio delle superstizioni popolari*, XVIII (1899) 123; S. Chiarelli, 'Altri usi nuziali di Chioggia', *Rivista delle tradizioni popolari italiane* I (1893–1894) 309; C. Guerrieri, 'Credenze superstizioni e usi popolari in Rimini e suoi dintorni', *Rivista* I (1893–1894) 314.

¹²⁸ Rafaële Corso, *Reviviscenze studi di tradizioni popolari italiane*, 85, 87, not. 1, 96.

¹²⁹ Juv. 6.204–205.

¹³⁰ Non. 12.15 (531).

WALTON BROOKS McDANIEL

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

AND

COCONUT GROVE, FLORIDA

HORACE, *SATIRES* I.1.86–91; A
DIFFERENT VIEW

I venture to take advantage of the interest that must have been aroused by the persuasive

article of Mr. Stevens in the Number of January 10 to offer a different interpretation of the above passage.

This satire expounds a stock topic of Epicureanism, which was forced to become and to remain anonymous in Augustan literature. Not a single editor of Horace has possessed more than a nodding acquaintance with this philosophy and for this reason the key to many puzzles has been overlooked. If we are ever to improve our understanding of Horace, I have long believed it will come about by supplying this deficiency.

Epicurus set great store by family ties and by friendship. His first converts, so far as we know, were his own three brothers and his devotion to his parents is a matter of record. 'Most beautiful is the sight of those near to us', he wrote in Vatican Saying 61, 'when the original relationship is marked by concord or creates a powerful impulse in that direction'.

The high value he set upon friendship is evidenced by Authorized Doctrine 27: 'Of all the preparations that wisdom makes for the perfection of the happy life by far the most important is the acquisition of friendship'. The use of wealth for this purpose is recommended in Vatican Saying 67, quoted in part: 'A life of real freedom cannot amass great wealth . . . but if it somehow does chance upon great wealth, even so it would lightheartedly disburse this to win the good will of a neighbor'.

These two items, family concord and friendship, constitute our background. Let us come to the text, reading *an* with good MSS instead of *at*; the scribes were as ignorant of Epicureanism as the editors are. We are faced with an indignant question, edged with a cutting irony.

an si cognatos, nullo natura labore
quos tibi dat, retinere velis servareque amicos,
infelix operam perdas, ut si quis asellum
in campo doceat parentem eurrere frenis?

We paraphrase: 'Is it possible, you poor misguided miser, you think you would waste your pains, like one who tries to make a war-horse out of a donkey, if you should try to keep the affection of your blood relations, whom nature bestows upon you without effort on your part, and to keep the good will of friends (whom you

don't win without effort) ?'

Incidentally, a pretty figure of speech, three for four, or the missing fourth, which must be supplied. Recall the advice of Epicurus; it is the part of wisdom to make friends and wealth is a means to this end.

NORMAN W. DEWITT
LINCOLN, ILLINOIS

COMIC RELIEF IN *OEDIPUS REX*

The comic relief in Shakespeare's tragedies shocked the Classicists of France. The miracle plays, from which Shakespearean drama developed, had its comic characters. Satan was its Punchinello. In Greek tragedy, which still kept its religious origin, humor was out of place, especially, as comedy in a separate play accompanied the tragedy. No comic relief would be needed anywhere if all were as responsive as a young maiden, who was shedding copious tears at a drama. When a neighbor wished to sympathize, she protested, 'Go away. Don't you see me enjoying myself ?'

Sorrow if expected is pathetic; sorrow where joy is expected is tragic. If, then, some joy is anticipated, sorrow sharpened on the edge of that joy rises from the pathetic to the tragic. The chorus makes a song of triumph and dances joyfully in anticipation of the birth of Oedipus from one of the gods. Jocasta has vainly begged Oedipus not to seek out his origin. Oedipus impulsively misinterpreted her plea. 'Cheer up. If I prove to be three times a slave born of a mother a slave for three generations, you, Jocasta, shall not prove evil.' 'I, deeming myself a child of Fortune, shall not feel dishonored.' The chorus (1086) echoing, as often, the thoughts of the protagonist, makes a lyric of joy out of his words.

An important character in the play is the shepherd from Corinth. By the so-called long arm of coincidence he arrives on the scene when Oedipus, despite Jocasta's rejection of all oracles, still fears that he may kill the King of Corinth whom he thinks to be his father. Jocasta meets the old shepherd, who brings word that Polybus, King of Corinth, is dead. Oedipus is summoned by Jocasta, who is shouting in triumph, 'O ye

oracles of the gods, where are you?' A flash of joy which makes her coming doom blacker.

The rapid dialogue which follows is one of the most thrilling in the play. Sophocles introduced the third actor to Greek tragedy. He made fine use of the introduction where Jocasta entered upon the quarrel of Oedipus and Creon but here the third actor creates a most tragic situation. The old shepherd feels that he is bringing good news. Oedipus is to be the King of Corinth, and the shepherd expects to make something by his message. Under the insistent questioning of Oedipus he imparts his information piecemeal. Oedipus need not fear that he is to marry his mother, because the queen of Corinth is not his mother. Line by line the truth comes out, and in the background all the time is Jocasta hearing her doom in the joyous words of the shepherd. 'O ye oracles of the gods, you are here,' her heart confesses, while in despair she tries to keep the truth from Oedipus.

The old shepherd has still his good humor when confronted by the servant of Laius. The servant, who saw the slaying of Laius by Oedipus, now finds out that Oedipus is the son of Laius, whom he was ordered to let die. The line for line of Oedipus, the questioner, is probable dialogue here through the craven fear of the servant, as it was before through the tantalizing joy of the old shepherd, who felt he should give his glad story in fragments. So faint comic relief accentuates tragic grief.

FRANCIS P. DONNELLY, S.J.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

REVIEWS

The Capture of Damietta by Oliver of Paderborn. Translated by JOHN J. GAVIGAN. viii, 112 pp. (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948.) \$1.25.

Students of the Middle Ages will welcome the appearance of the second volume of the *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of History*, 3rd series, published under the direction of John L. LaMonte by the Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania. Oliver of Paderborn's eyewitness account is one of the chief sources for the history

of the Fifth Crusade, and the Latin text published by O. Hoogeweg (1894) is not readily available.

Oliver's work deserves to be better known. He was influential in promoting the Fifth Crusade by preaching the Cross in Germany for several years and in 1215 represented the archbishopric of Cologne at the Lateran Council which settled many details of the ill-fated expedition. His discussion of the capture of Damietta and of the events which followed is revealing. He writes as a staunch supporter of Pelagius of Albano, the Papal Legate who, not content with the successful capture of Damietta and the consequent offer by the Sultan of the return of almost all the former Kingdom of Jerusalem, insisted against the wise advice of the secular leaders upon continuing the campaign. The disastrous results Oliver blames upon 'the enormity of our evil deeds and the vast number of our crimes (which) were compelling the vengeance of divine decision' (ch. 78).

Father Gavigan's excellent translation is faithful both to the letter and to the spirit of Oliver's account and preserves the flavor of the Latin text. From pages almost utterly lacking in classical allusions but filled with quotations from the Bible (which Father Gavigan gives according to the Douay version for the Old Testament and the edition of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine for the New Testament), Oliver's personality emerges very clearly. An enthusiastic Crusader with a simple and humble faith he was also a keen and intelligent, if often overcredulous, observer.

Appendix A contains a translation of the concluding part of the Darmstadt manuscript. A brief discussion of the manuscripts of the different versions of Oliver's work would have been interesting but may be found in Hoogeweg's edition. Appendix B, a brief linguistic commentary, presents a clear picture of the Latinity of a thirteenth-century historical text with its many variations from classical usage. A map of the Levant and the Nile Delta in the thirteenth century, the short bibliography, and, above all, the very full notes dealing with per-

sons, places and events, mentioned by Oliver, will be found most useful. One hopes that Father Gavigan intends to make other works of Oliver of Paderborn available to readers interested in this important and little known writer.

BERTHE M. MARTI

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

Arx Antiqua. A Selection from the Early Roman Poets. Translated and edited by JOHN ROWE WORKMAN. v, 26 pp. (Privately printed, 1948.) \$2.00 (paper, \$1.25)

This attractive little volume is designed for use in a course of Roman literature in English translation at Brown University (p. iii). It deserves and will undoubtedly receive recognition in similar courses in other institutions.

In his Introduction (pp. 1-9) Professor Workman sketches briefly the beginnings of literature at Rome, summarizing the achievements of Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Ennius, Pacuvius, Accius, and Lucilius. The account is in general well written, but a few minor points may be noted. Is it wise to refer to the presentation of comedies and tragedies in 240 B.C. (p. 3), when we are told only that Livius Andronicus in that year produced a comedy and a tragedy? Workman gives the traditional view that Andronicus was brought to Rome after the capture of Tarentum in 272 B.C., but this creates chronological difficulties and has been doubted; cf. Beare in *CQ* 34 (1940), pp. 11 ff. Since twenty-six comedies of Plautus and Terence are extant, Workman properly devotes his space to the writers of epic and tragedy, but would not a brief mention of Caecilius Statius have been appropriate—especially since some ancient critics considered him the equal, even the superior, of the two playwrights whose comedies have survived?

This suggests also that a few Caecilian fragments might have been included among the translations—notably those of the *Plocium*, where we have a unique opportunity of comparing a comic passage with its Menandrian original. But it would be ungenerous to criticize the editor for not planning his book differently. He has made twenty-nine skilfully wrought verse translations of the longer fragments, each preceded by a short but helpful

introductory statement. About half of the translations come from Ennius, but Naevius, Pacuvius, Accius, and Lucilius are also represented. The volume offers to students a useful introduction to the early poetic achievements of the Romans. It is regrettable that so little of the epics and tragedies has survived from this period of great literary activity.

GEORGE E. DUCKWORTH

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Leave Your Language Alone! By ROBERT A. HALL, JR. Preliminary Edition. iv, 163 pp. (Ithaca, N. Y., Division of Modern Languages, Cornell University.)

In language, certain noises (speech sounds) combine into certain arrangements to the exclusion of certain others: strongly aspirated sounds like those initial in English *pin* or *kin* occur before stressed vowels except when certain consonants precede (*skin* has an unaspirated *k*); the sequence of sounds spelled *-en* follows the sequence *ox-* but not the sequence *box-* (*oxen*, *boxes*); *to* is found after *want* but not after *must*; *barking* is found before *dog*, *meowing* before *cat*, *ill-gotten* before *gain*; and so on. It is the task of linguistics to make such statements exhaustive and economical, either for a given speech community at one place and time (Modern American English; Classical Latin) or in terms of historical change.

This way of looking at things, whether its sheer mathematical complexity is realized or not, seems trivial to many. Language phenomena form a background to whatever we do or experience; hence, they are not noticed with real consistency. Instead, a customary emphasis on certain secondary practices like spelling, deliberate expression in writing, verbal definition, translation, makes us aware of language under artificial conditions and leads us to take reports on such awareness for primary linguistic data. A formidable folklore has arisen, according to which, to name only a few points, language must be viewed as an expression of pre-existent thought, syntactic details are subject to (non-linguistic) logic, languages of literate peoples are—as languages—better than others. Basic English is an easy language to learn for anybody, sound

change is either corruption from a true pronunciation or avoidance of unpronounceable sounds as the case may be, the Greek dual had to be lost because it was an unnecessary luxury, etc., etc. Linguists (Hall calls them linguisticians which is perhaps not a bad way out of the current homonymy between scientist and parrot) have come to see with increasing clarity that speech can be studied without commitment to psychological theories, that logic is mostly invoked by way of rationalizing standard or alleged standard speech forms, that varieties in language structure are infinite but apparently not especially correlated with literacy, that Basic English syntax is hard to learn for a Chinese, that there is no gauge for looking at a sound change as either a corruption or an improvement, and that the English or Latin plural looks just as superfluous to a Japanese (whose language lacks number as an obligatory category) as the dual looks to us or, for that matter, to the Greeks after it had disappeared from their speech. The lesson ought to be plain. There is no shortcut to the patient exploring of the patterns in which language phenomena occur and change. Most attempts at accounting for these patterns and at seeing (as the saying goes) more than mere form 'behind' language have turned out to be premature and of a metaphysical *ad hoc* nature. Too often they recall the Molierian physician's answer to the question why opium makes people fall asleep: it does because it has a *virtus dormitiva*.

In the natural sciences matters like these are no problem. The common man has learned to accept the results of physics even when they contradict his common sense. But the humanities and social studies do not command any such prestige. It is particularly bitter to watch a deluge of irresponsible books, articles, causeries, and advertisements dispensing the same old chestnuts on language, while efforts to popularize sound linguistics have remained precious few since W. D. Whitney's days. In a list of Some Useful Books (160-2) Hall mentions Sturtevant's *Introduction*; he could have added L. R. Palmer's *Introduction to Modern Linguistics* and E. A. Nida's *Linguistic Interludes*, but

hardly anything else on a beginner's level. Yet, besides these, a book with a somewhat different appeal is sorely needed: a popularization of attitudes, results, and applications, written journalistically and addressing itself to the public at large, rather than to specialized, if elementary, learners.

This is what Hall's little book is intended to be. Its irreverent title is matched by somewhat iconoclastic contents, but he speaks less in anger (let alone superciliousness) than in sorrow and with a grim determination to convince his reader. Moreover, the book is informative and the issues are not oversimplified to the point of giving the impression that linguists talk only generalities and have no detailed techniques—a common pitfall in writing for laymen. There are four parts: I. Things We Worry About (standards of correctness, confusion between language and writing, between language and literature, etc.); II. How Language is Built (descriptive grammar); III. Language In The World Around Us (meaning, dialect geography, change); and IV. What We Can Do About Language (teaching spelling, grammar, foreign language teaching, international language, linguistic insights and society). The second and the third are, of course, the crucial ones, and they appear to succeed very well indeed in setting forth the essential unity of procedure in phonology, morphology, and syntax, which is based on the rigorously formal approach alluded to above. What it can achieve may be seen from Hall's comparison between two widely different parts-of-speech systems, that of English and that of (Micronesian) Marshallese (61-4). No archimedie position from which to master difference is conceivable unless the categories for each language, and for each strictly on its own merits, are set up first. Familiar tags like 'noun' or 'verb' may be used, but only if the need for their redefinition from language to language is understood. 'Applied to English, our customary Latinizing grammar is not only a distortion of the facts of the language, it is downright wasteful' (71)—doubly so, it should be added, in the teaching of Latin itself to English-speaking students. Here one should base his drill exercises on an objective compari-

son between the two structures and not worry too much about the decline in the beginners' knowledge of a grammatical nomenclature that was never designed to fit their native language.

Hall has been able to convert a great deal of sound linguistic doctrine (largely, and rightly so, Leonard Bloomfield's) into good elementary argument; anyone who has been faced with the task will agree that this is considerable praise. In the final, printed edition to which we look forward, a number of minor inadvertences will surely disappear (Latinists will be glad to see vowel length marked more consistently in the Latin examples, e.g. in *-bas* on pp. 100f.). One also wishes that Hall would reconsider the question of style. The deliberate manner in which the presentation was kept 'free, easy, and colloquial' (preface) seems, not surprisingly, to have resulted in a somewhat unnatural expression which (to judge by a few random reactions) is in danger of alienating precisely some of those who would otherwise be Hall's best readers. There is, naturally, room for disagreement on specific points, especially in matters where the methodology is less settled. Here belongs the discussion of meaning and change of meaning, but also the theory of sound change. Phonemic split developing from a nondistinctive difference (e.g. when *s* in Lat. *genus* remains *s* whereas the 'z' in *genesa* falls together with old *r* [*genera*]) is relatively easy to explain (106); but split is only one type of sound change, and a type which is secondary to phonemic merger. Merger, however, is much harder to understand—if at all, only through the assumption of borrowing between subtly different dialect pronunciations.

There is much in the book that has more than mere pedagogical value. Suffice it to mention the interesting quotation from the sixteenth-century Italian scholar, Claudio Tolomei, on sound change (109f.) and the frank, inspired condemnation of linguistic nationalism (on the closing pages).

Even in its present, provisional form we wish Hall's book wide success with the public in general and, most emphatically, with the teachers of languages.

HENRY M. HOENIGSWALD

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Virgil's Mind at Work: An Analysis of the Symbolism of the Aeneid. By ROBERT W. CRUTTWELL. 182 pp. (Oxford, Basil Blackwell; New York, The Macmillan Co., 1947.)

This book contains a one-page Introduction and twelve chapters covering such related (or so the author thinks) topics as Venus and Cybele, Iulus and Iulius, Troy and Rome, Teucer and Dardanus, Laomedon and Tiberinus, Atlas and Hercules, Shield and Maze, Vulcan and Vesta, Hut and Hive, Urn and House, Ashes and Spirit, Tomb and Womb. The basis of the grouping in each chapter is the similar or identical phraseology which Vergil employs in each case. The author defines symbolism as 'whatever means more than itself' and a poet is 'whoever verbally communicates his symbols.' Such definitions leave the field wide open and Mr. Cruttwell proceeds to maneuver thereon without restraint. The book is difficult to read and still more difficult to review. The author's method is most adequately presented by means of a few short quotations from the text, as follows. Regarding Vergil's conception of the bond between Iulus and Iulius, Mr. Cruttwell summarizes thus (p. 25): 'Such a renewal of the fertility of Earth's motherhood, as is here symbolized under the Julian revival of Earth's Golden Age, therefore precisely corresponds to the renewal of the fertility of Rome's divine motherhood (VI, 784) as personified by Mother Venus and Mother Cybele and Mother Vesta, whose cults are renewed under Augustus as a Caesar who is Trojan because a Julius descended from Iulus (I, 257-296).' At the end of his chapter on Troy and Rome he concludes (p. 40) that the symbolism of the *Aeneid* is 'axial, revolving as it were spherically about one central line between two poles—the one pole being a Troy whose symbols are Roman, the other pole a Rome whose symbols are Trojan; and the subjectively Roman thought of the poet travels from Rome to Troy, while the objectively Trojan theme of the poem travels from Troy to Rome,' which statement is followed by a translation of *Aeneid* I, 1-7, by way of illustration. The relationship between Atlas and Hercules is first introduced (pp. 69f.) by resort to the closeness in meaning between *Atlas*, *ἄτλας* and *durus*. Per-

haps the height of the author's imagination and involved style is best illustrated by the attempt (pp. 130f.) to relate Urn and House, but it is too long to repeat here.

There are some valuable pages in the book and the materials assembled by Mr. Cruttwell will be useful for an entirely different application, but to make the work at all lucid an index and a rather elaborate chart of some kind would be necessary, neither of which is given. Moreover, the style is cumbersome, repetitious, and involved, and characterized by long, tedious sentences, some of which occupy half a page, or even more. Consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Cruttwell seems to be imitating the ancient Sophists in his balancing of ponderous phrase against phrase and in his word-jingles.

E. L. HIGBARGER

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

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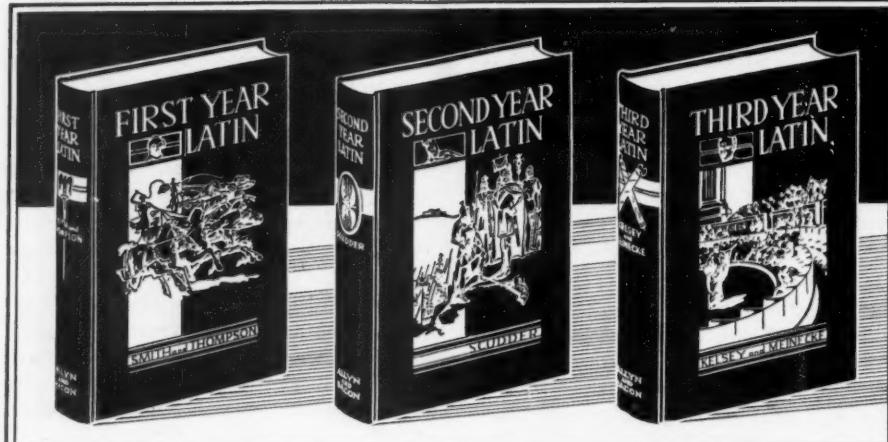
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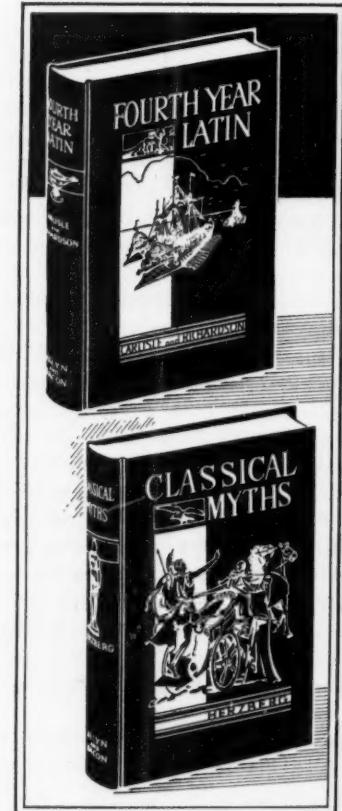
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